SEASON OF 1953-54

The Ripon College Artists Series

presents

THE LESLIE BELL SINGERS

DR. LESLIE R. BELL, *Director*

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SENIOR HIGH AUDITORIUM

TUESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 10, 1953

Direction—Edward F. Tabbert

PROGRAM

I.

MUSIC FOR WORSHIP

Art owes an incalculable debt to religion. For countless centuries, man has used literature, music, painting and architecture as a means of expressing devotion to his Maker and in so doing has realized his greatest artistic triumphs. The following works are contrasting examples of the contributions made by the churches of the Western civilization:

Battle Hymn of the Republic - - - - *Howe-Steffe*

The exact origin of this fine melody is somewhat uncertain. Various words have been written for it, but those of Julia Ward Howe published in 1862 are the best. Canadians and people of other lands consider the Battle Hymn one of the greatest songs ever to come out of the United States.

Ipse Te Cogat Pietas - - - - - - *Di Lasso* (1530-1594)

Let All the Nations Praise the Lord - - - *Leisring-?*

Di Lasso and Leisring were composers of the Renaissance era. The name of the former was celebrated throughout Europe, but about Leisring little or nothing is known. The Di Lasso work combines two melodic lines with great contrapuntal skill. Leisring writes for a double chorus, one of which echoes the music of the first.

Kyrie, from "Missa Alma Pater" - - - - *Gregorian* (11th Century)

Alleluia, from "Exultate" - - - - - - *Mozart* (1756-1791)

These two examples of Roman Catholic music were written 700 years apart. The simple unison, plain song of the Kyrie is in decided contrast to the ornate Alleluia of Mozart which places emphasis more on vocal display than upon religious fervor.

Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child
Walk Together, Chillun - - *Negro Spirituals*

The spiritual is an example not of traditional liturgy but of the simple song of faith of the American Negro. Sometimes his song is deeply melancholy as he broods upon the sins of this earth; at other times it is hysterically joyous as he gazes upward towards the heaven to come.

INTERMISSION

II.

SONGS OF NORTH AMERICA

The discovery of thousands of wonderful folk songs among the rural peoples of this continent and the creation of strong original melodies by urban composers both prove that North America can boast of a legacy of song as vital and individual as that of Europe:

Rhapsody on Newfoundland Folk Songs - - - - *Bell*

The folk-music of Newfoundland, Canada's newest province, is all too little known. Cut off from the rest of the world by a rocky, twisted coastline, and an uninhabited interior, the Newfoundlanders have learned to entertain themselves and a frequently recurring theme is that of the sea and its place in the lives of the fishermen. Several of these melodies were discovered by Dr. Bell when visiting Newfoundland in 1947.

A la Claire Fontaine
Youppe, Youppe sur la Riviere - *French Canadian Folk Songs*

The French Canadians, a strongly nationalistic people, have lived in relative isolation and have developed their own songs which number in the thousands. The popularity of A la Claire Fontaine in Quebec stands second only to that of Alouette. Youppe, Youppe is also a great favorite.

A Road to the Isles - - - - - - *Hebridean*

The people of Ontario have few folk songs of their own and seem to prefer to sing those which their forefathers have brought over from Britain. The fact that a large number of Ontario's citizens are of Scottish origin makes such a melody as A Road to the Isles immensely popular.

Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair
Lollytoodum *American Folk Songs*

The first of these melodies is an example of the sheer simple beauty so characteristic of American folk song. Lollytoodum tells of a girl who finds herself a fine husband and whose success causes her mother to announce herself as "in the market, too."

Cuanto Le Gusta - - - - - - *Latin American*

The influences of Latin American music culture on the rest of the continent has been extraordinary. The song offered here is a recent one, but it contains the same exotic rhythm that has made South American folk song so distinctive.

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INTERMISSION

III.

MUSIC OF MANY MOODS

The following numbers are selected from the vast repertoire which the Leslie Bell Singers have presented on their weekly network broadcasts and which have also found particular favor with Canadian concert audiences:

Beau Soir - - - - - - - - - *Debussy*

Debussy's understanding of the female voice is revealed in such sensitive wrting as that of Beau Soir. In this arrangement, the original piano accompaniment is incorporated into the choral line as a vocalise.

Viennese Waltz Medley - - - - - - - - -

The fine old tradition of Viennese waltz music has been carried on into the present century by contemporary writers. Here melodies of Oscar Strauss and Romberg are combined with the rhythm of the master, Johann Strauss.

The Little White Hen - - - - - *Scandello* (17th Century)

Many of the attempts at programme music by early writers have had amusing results. Scandello here describes graphically the clucking of a little hen as it runs about the barnyard.

Le Fiacre - - - - - - - - - *Sablon*

Here, sung in French, is the story of a coquettish young wife who had a rendezvous in a coach, but was discovered by her jealous husband. The voice of the coachman and the clopping of the horses' hoofs form a vivid part of the arrangement.

The Old Songs - - - - - - - - - *Bell*

This number serves to introduce the Leslie Bell Girls' Quartet, a new unit which is meeting with great success on its own in Canadian radio and television.

Homage to Gershwin - - - - - - - - -

The loss to music suffered by the premature death of George Gershwin in 1937 is only now becoming fully appreciated. Gershwin wrote music that was truly American and brought dignity to a type of song formerly associated only with the entertainment world. A Canadian choir pays tribute to a great American in a medley of songs and themes from Gershwin's best known works.

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Choral Arrangements: Leslie R. Bell, M.A., Mus.D.
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